FAMOUS PLAYERS THEATRES'

NATIONAL Ballyhoo

COMPILED AND EDITED BY DAN KRENDEL

SERVE • SAVE • SELL AND PROFIT WITH SHOWMANSHIP!

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WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

Much has been said and written in the pages of our trade press about the state of our business. Speculation is rife as to its future, and ours. Irresponsible persons within and without the industry have at various times and in various degrees chastised our business and all of us who make our living out of it. This isn't something new ... it has all happened before ... it's an old, old story. We've been dead and buried many times, and yet ... you and I and countless thousands like us are still around ... still enjoying life and the pretty good livelihood afforded us by the business and the industry we love so well.

Sure ... things are rougher ... competition is keener, and we really have to battle for our fair share of the nation's entertainment dollar. It's still there, and our share is also there to be had ... only we no longer can sit still and expect it to fall into our laps. We've got to go after it ... with every tool and every trick at our command. Some of us either don't know or have forgotten how to fight. If that's so, then it's time some of that complacency were shaken out of us.

Where do we go from here? You know the answer to that one. Our front cover message in the final issue of the BLITZ FOR FITZ bulletin was headed ... "The End And a New Beginning ..." It was the end of an effort ... a concentrated, albeit limited effort ... and a good one. Do we let it go at that? Not on your life ... I think we're all good enough Showmen to realize that nothing is so completely final as to truly spell out "The End ..." The end of anything must be followed by the beginning of something new ...

I am sure that we all learned a very valuable lesson from the sustained effort we put into the Blitz drive, and each individual's contribution to the overall effort. Where do we go from here? I say to a new and much brighter future ... a future which beckons to all of us, every day of every week, if we will just snap to the alert and make up our minds to recognize it. It's OUR future fellows ... and it's here TODAY, not tomorrow. Let's get a good grip on it, and shape it the way we would like it to be.

D.E.K.

FAMOUS PLAYERS CANADIAN CORPORATION 1200 ROYAL BANK BLDG., TORONTO

A MESSAGE FROM OUR VEEP

"Ever since the conclusion of our recent, very successful PROFIT BLITZ FOR FITZ, we have had requests from District Managers, Managers and Partners, that the bulletins which were such an important part of our drive be continued in some form or other. The bulletins seem to have struck a responsive chord in the hearts and minds of every one of our men. They served to bring the managers in far distant points closer together ... They seem to have created a closeness, a kinship, a unity of purpose. They have jumped the barriers of districts and of divisions. There isn't a doubt in our mind that if they didn't accomplish any other purpose, they did serve to cement the family ties of our great big happy FAMOUS family of men and women the country over."

"So ... we held a meeting. In fact we held several meetings, and decided that the famous BLITZ bulletin would continue. The format will be a little different, but in essence the make-up will be similar to that you had become accustomed to during the drive."

"Dan Krendel has agreed to publish the bulletin once every two weeks. Its prime purpose will be to disseminate information and to exchange ideas that may be of help to each of our operations, wherever they may be. It is YOUR bulletin; it will be up to you to keep it alive. Send your ideas, suggestions, selling campaigns directly to Dan, as you did during our Blitz. He will sift them and present the better ones to the same committee which served during our drive. There may even be prizes for you from time to time ... for those managers, that is, who do an outstanding selling job, or for those employees, including managers, who contribute ideas that are helpful to our operations. You have already received some information from Dan; more details will be found in these pages."

"No one of us is a genius ... but I recall one interpretation of the term, as published in an earlier bulletin ... "Genius is the power of making a continuous effort." That's all we expect of anybody ... a continuous effort. We're into a new year now. No one can part the curtains of time to peek into the future ... we can, however help shape that future, for ourselves, our families and our company, by exerting a continuous effort every day, every week, every month. With that on our side we can't help but finish the year away ahead of the game."

"Good luck with the new bulletin. It's your show entirely ... make it a good one, and in keeping with the high standard of Showmanship that FAMOUS PLAYERS has always stood for."

R. W. Bolstad

AND AWAY WE GO ...

Well fellows ... here we are again, with a new series of bulletins, custom-tailored to fit your every individual need. It is important that you realize that these are YOUR bulletins, and that the success or failure of this new undertaking is entirely dependent on your complete and unselfish co-operation. I can't do it alone ... but if we work together and co-ordinate our efforts, we must come up with something that will benefit every one of us within the framework of Famous Players. That is our objective.

If an idea worked for you, it is logical to assume that it can work for other men across the circuit. Tell us about it, so we can pass along the information.

If you read something in these pages that you can adapt to your operation ... let us know about it. It's the only measuring stick we have for evaluating the worth of our bulletin.

Let's keep it interesting as well as informative, by injecting personal items about your staff, yourself and your family. Don't be shy ... your co-workers in Famous really are interested in YOU, and like to read about you, so ... keep us informed ... You're BALLYHOO'S reporter in your town. Be a good one.

Our executives and department heads will from time to time pass along messages which will be published in your interest. Ben Geldsaler has already promised that he will continue his "Over Ben's Shoulder" column ... and the other lads have promised plenty of material for our pages.

And ... the awards committee will meet at regular intervals to look over your entries, and I have it on pretty good authority that, even though we don't have any special budgets for the purpose, the better selling jobs, suggestions for more economic operation, service ideas etc. will be substantially rewarded ... so, make up your mind that you're going to get your hands on some of that scratch, huh?

This is YOUR bulletin guys ... get on that old band wagon and start beating those drums. You can help me substantially by sending in your entries every week ... and the worth-while ones will be reported in these pages as soon after they are received as is possible. Prize winners will be published immediately after each sitting of the awards committee.

Let's get the show on the road fellows ... and the only way we can do that is if each and every one of you starts sending in his material RIGHT NOW. Good luck, all.

Dan Krendel

SHOWMANSHIP SWEEPSTAKES

We've had two $100.00 winners in MOTION PICTURE EXHIBITOR'S Sweepstakes in the past few weeks ... Mike King of the Nortown in Toronto knocked off a C note for his Circus Clown deal ... and last week Bill Burke of the Capitol in Brantford got his second hundred dollar prize, for his Elmer Safety Parties. Congratulations Mike and Bill.

We've also had a couple of runners-up, in the persons of Ivan Ackery who just missed top spot with his terrific selling job on PETE KELLY'S BLUES, and Les Mitchell of the Capitol in Welland who was named 4th runner-up for his fine DAM BUSTERS promotion.

You know fellows ... if you don't submit entries you just can't hope to win. Makes sense, huh? Bill Burke was the only one to think of sending details of his Elmer deal ... I know of many other excellent Elmer selling jobs which might have wound up in the dough ... but ... the guys on EXHIBITOR just aren't mind readers, and have no way of knowing what you did, if you don't tell them.

Their offer of $100.00 a week still goes ... so how about going after some of that easy dough? I've seen some of your stuff, and I'm sure it's good enough to win ... BUT again, it's up to you to tell them about it. Of course if you just don't have any use for that hundred ... well, let's leave it at that, huh?

.x.x.x.x.x.

THAT'S REALLY SELLING

Les Mitchell, skipper of the Capitol in Welland is in a pretty rough spot ... needs every single buck he can possibly attract into the old box-office, just to stay alive. Les doesn't sit around and wait for pennies from heaven ... He goes after them.

For several years now we've been getting two or three morning rentals during Christmas week ... for Santa parties for children of employees of local plants. Les has done something I haven't seen before ... He has contacted the plants, and already has FOUR rentals lined up for NEXT CHRISTMAS, and they are signed, sealed and delivered, and I mean covered by our regular rental contracts. Too far ahead to worry about it ...? Not on your life. He's sure of these now, and is going after others. Nice going Les ... and how about the rest of you guys?

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STAPLING LETTERS

Puleese fellows ... DON'T staple your material ... use a clip instead. Of course that goes for our various departments in the office too ... especially when they staple several unrelated letters together, and we break all our nails trying to get them apart. Have a heart guys ... and gals. Staples have their place ... but so have paper clips.

ACK'S PERSONALITY PARADE

You may recall reading in one of our Blitz bulletins about Ivan Ackery's Friday night Personality Parades ... As a matter of fact, Ack won a prize at the time, for the manner in which he organized this deal.

We now have the practical results, and I can tell you that his Friday night business is nothing short of being sensational. It took a lot of work, and a lot of organization, but the deal paid off ... and good. I wonder just how many other managers have done something about organizing a Personality Parade of their own ... or have I just been reporting all these money-making stunts for my own amusement?

Briefly what Ivan does is this ... Each Friday night a local, national or international personality is interviewed on the stage of the Orpheum ... Ack also produces a stage show consisting of local talent, and his customers eat it up. He plans well in advance, and so far has had as guests, a Barbershop Quartette ... an all-magic show ... a big Chinese show ... also outstanding night club personalities, T.V. and Radio stars, etc. etc.

You have local personalities ... entertainers ... talent, in your town. What are you doing about it? You can do worse than take a leaf from Ack's book, and turn them into valuable box-office dollars.

If you're not quite sure how to proceed, I'm sure a note to Ack will get you the information by return of mail. How about it guys?

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WHAT DO YOU KNOW ...

Yes, what do you know about your projection equipment ...? and I don't suggest that you should be a practical technician. There have been a lot of changes in our equipment in the past three or four years. Have you kept up with them? Do you know what they are? Are you prepared to discuss them intelligently? Have you taken the trouble to find out?

This is interesting ... In BOXOFFICE under date of November 26th, on page 19, appears a story headed, " SMPTE Issues New Booklet on Projection Systems." It appears that the society has produced a booklet describing all the new methods of production and projection put into use during and since 1952. It covers 35 mm sound pictures, Cinerama, CinemaScope, VistaVision, Superscope and Todd-AO. It's free for the asking, and I wonder how many of you have taken the trouble to ask for it? I know Les Mitchell in Welland did ... I saw a copy on his desk. If you're interested, copies may be obtained from the SMPTE headquarters, 55 W 42nd St. in New York.

Have you read your trade magazines lately?

UNITED NATIONS' FLAGS

Recently you received a memo from Jack Fitzgibbons, advising of the availability of 38 individual miniature United Nations flags ... to be used at your discretion in the promotion of the sale of popcorn. Several suggestions were contained in Jack's memo, and also a request for any further suggestions you may have, which may benefit the sales across the circuit.

With the U.N. constantly in the headlines, this looks like a natural, and the kids should certainly go for these flags. The price is reasonable enough ... half a cent per each.

Jack and his gang are certainly exerting every effort to keep you in business, and coming up with new gags and gimmicks every time you talk to one of them. Are you really cashing in on all this custom-tailored merchandising? Have you ordered your supply of flags? Have you decided how to make the best use of them?

What are you waiting for fella? You need that extra revenue NOW ... today, not tomorrow or next week.

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ADVERTISE YOUR SHOWTIMES

Sure ... we've talked about it and written about it, and still I see tear sheets by the dozens without the slightest reference to the starting times of the features. We certainly can't all be wrong ... and I see in the February 4th issue of S.T.R. (Showmen's Trade Review, to you ...) a whole page devoted to the subject. A very important circuit ... R.K.O. insist on the times appearing in all their newspaper ads ... including the world-famous Radio City Music Hall in New York. They feel that it gets customers into their theatres.

All it takes is an extra line or two of type, guys. How about making a point of starting TODAY to carry your starting times in all newspaper ads, and all outside display material. What say?

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SAVE ... SAVE ... SAVE

Paul Valliere of the Capitol in Quebec is always on the alert for ways and means of saving a buck. As is customary during the Holiday season, Paul made plans to decorate the front of his theatre ... a local sign painter was called in, and came up with a price of $140.00 for the job.

Paul felt that this was pure and simple robbery ... gave him the old heave-ho, and proceeded to do the job himself, with the aid of his maintenance man. He wound up with just as attractive a front ... at a total cost of ... yes, you read it right ... TWENTY BUCKS. Nice going Paul ... and in anybody's language that looks like $120.00 saved.

NEVER SAY DIE

Ralph Mitcheltree of the Capitol in Calgary had SINCERELY YOURS booked ... He was aware of the history of this feature, but didn't just sit back and cry about it ... He went out and did a real selling job.

In return for a display in his lobby, Ralph knocked off good mention on the Liberace show over the local T.V. paid for entirely by the local sponsors, Dad's Cookies and Calgary Packers. About $160.00 worth of time. Not bad, huh? In addition he arranged with the local Austin dealers to place a brand new model in front of the theatre, with a six-sheet cut-out of Liberace sitting at the wheel. Attracted a lot of attention ... but, better still ... the dealer paid 50% of Ralph's opening day newspaper ad. How do you do it boy?

Just so's everybody would be happy ... Ralph also tied in with Motor Car Supply, sponsors of the Sunday Liberace show, and wound up with $150.00 worth of free spots.

I'd say this was a swell selling job ,.. and even if Ralph wasn't too happy with the B.O. results, he at least has the satisfaction of knowing that it wasn't for lack of trying. Nice work Ralph ... keep your stuff comin' ... We like hearing from you.

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HE ALSO SERVES ... WHO SAVES

I should have said "She ..." Olga Frenette advises that she has now discontinued purchases of ice for her Coke head and pre-cooler, and is making her own ice in the manner described in these pages some time ago. The only thing that puzzles me is why has it taken so long to get started? Saves her the cost of 25 pounds of ice daily.

Olga has also made a deal with the new record bar in town, and in return for a double guest ticket they provide her with all the records she requires for intermissions, and before and after the show. Seems to me we used to do this as a policy many years ago ... How about the rest of you guys making a contact ... instead of paying for every change of records?

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CONDOLENCES

Our deepest sympathy to Bert Wiber on the recent passing of his father ... To Earl Harrington projectionist at the Royal in Woodstock who also lost his father ... and to Madeleine Curtis, assistant to Earl Scandrett at the Royal in Woodstock who lost her sister a few days ago.

The thoughts of all the girls and boys in our Famous family are with you in your hour of sorrow.

AND SO TO BED

I mean the form ... not I. This concludes the first issue of our new FAMOUS PLAYERS THEATRES' NATIONAL BALLYHOO ... and it's sorta strange to send out eight pages as against the thirty or forty we used to get out for the BLITZ. We're going to try and keep this small and snappy ... but naturally, the size of our issues will be determined by the amount of material you fellows send in. Everything worth-while, that can be of use to the rest of the managers, will be published ... but ... please don't expect to get a spread if the sum total of your selling activities is a few window cards placed around town, or a couple of thousand heralds ... That's selling?

And please fellows ... if you want proper credit, you mu st send your material to me, complete with visual evidence of everything you claim credit for. By that I mean newspaper tear sheets, photos of especially attractive or unusual displays, samples of all printed material etc. Don't just send along carbon copy of a letter you wrote your district manager and expect me to visualize your effort. I want to be completely fair to everybody ... and so will have to use the same measuring stick for everybody. Makes sense, doesn't it?

Cut your staff in on this deal guys ... Good prizes will be awarded for suggestions, ideas or selling regardless of whether you, your assistant, doorman, cashier, usher or anybody else on your staff did the planning. Be fair ... give those responsible proper credit so we may publicize their efforts too, in our bulletin. That's the way to maintain your staff's interest and keep them happy in their jobs.

And guys ... I'm always open to suggestions for the improvement of this sheet. If you have any ideas ... please send them along, and if you'd like to write something for our pages ... we're wide open. This is YOUR bulletin, and you alone can determine how newsy and how effective it is.

As mentioned previously, because of the mass of detail involved it is impossible to publish it weekly ... so, you'll be getting your copy every two weeks. I feel that is often enough, and will give all of us a chance to properly prepare our material without the bugaboo of a rush deadline hanging over our heads. However, in order to have a backlog of material, I urge you to make a habit of sending in your entries WEEKLY. They'll be reported at the very earliest possible time.

You'll notice that our masthead proclaims that this is a NATIONAL Ballyhoo ... so, let's keep it National in scope ... with good entries, every week, from every part of our circuit, from the Maritimes to B.C. In that way it will truly be YOUR bulletin.

Well ... that's about it. Be seein' you in a couple of weeks' time. Get your copy in, huh?

Dan Krendel